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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR JULY 12, 2007

¶1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for July 12, 2007. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL:

¶2. BOLGE / EKSPRES / HURRIYET: CHP national leader Deniz Baykal attended a ground-breaking ceremony of a waste water management facility in Mersin. Baykal addressed a crowd of people and said that a new Turkey would emerge namely after the July 22 election. Meanwhile, the dailies report CHP's and DP's Adana candidates as continuing their election campaigns in which they opened new elections offices in districts and quarters of the province.

¶3. BOLGE: DP party members were reportedly pleased that 20,000 people attended the political rally DP leader Mehmet Agar held in Adana the previous day despite the high summer temperatures.

¶4. EVRENSEL / GUNDEM / HURRIYET: Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir criticized recent investigation started against his remarks delivered in a program of pro-PKK Roj TV which branded the PKK's activities as "armed Kurdish opposition." Baydemir, who was not able to understand the grounds for the investigation, said his remarks were not new and he had been using such statements since 10 years.

¶5. GUNDEM: Soldiers are allegedly removing the posters and banners an independent candidate has been hanging in the streets in Bitlis's Tatvan district. DTP provincial chairman in Tatvan said they filed a complaint with the authorities against such acts.

¶6. ZAMAN / GUNDEM: Four people have been detained in Sanliurfa's Viransehir district on charges of "praising criminals and making propaganda for the PKK" during a funeral ceremony of a PKK militant who died in a military conflict in Tunceli. Police are still searching five other people against whom same charges were brought.

¶7. EVRENSEL: To dismiss reported wrong speculations surfacing recently about DTP's attitude concerning EMEP (Party of Labor), a party which announced its support for independent candidates previously, DTP national headquarters announced that they had advised party grassroots to support EMEP in constituencies where DTP did not endorse any independent candidates.

SECURITY:

¶18. GUNDEM: PKK reportedly announced that 446 soldiers and 96 PKK militants have died in a total of 252 military operations conducted against the PKK in the last six months. The intensity of the conflicts reportedly increased in May and June, reports the daily.

¶19. GUNDEM: The daily describes some recent newspaper stories coming out about PKK members burning eight heavy machinery vehicles at a mine run by a private company in a village of Hatay as false allegations.

ECONOMY:

¶10. EKSPRES: EPDK (Regulatory Board for Energy Market) granted a license to a joint-venture company of Turkish Petrol Ofisi and Australian OMW to build an oil refinery in Adana's Ceyhan district. Chairperson of Ceyhan's Chamber of Commerce said the 4.5 billion dollar investment will create 1000 jobs.

¶11. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): A Chinese commercial delegation paid a visit to Mersin's Chamber of Commerce and Industry to explore investment opportunities in the region.

CRIME AND LAW ENFORCEMENT:

¶12. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / ZAMAN: Hakkari and Yuksekova district police conducted two separate anti-drug operations. Police found a total of 70 kilograms of heroin in a house and on a person they searched. Three people were detained. Meanwhile, police in Hatay searched a car which entered Turkey from Syria through a border gate and found 30 kilograms of smuggled gold

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hidden in the car.  
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